A PROTE-
STATION MADE
FOR THE MOST MIGH-
ty and moste redoubted kynge of Englande. &c. and his hole coun-
sell and clergie, wherin is declared, that neyther his hyghenes, nor his
prelates, neyther any other prynce, or prelate, is bounde to come or
sende, to the pretended coun-
cell, that Paule bysshoppe
of Rome, first by a bul
indicted at Man-
tua, a citie in
Italy, &.
nowe
a late by an other bull, hath pro-
roged to a place, no man
can telle where.

FOR AS MOCHE as it is wel knowē, almoste to the holle worlde, that we entende nothynge soo ernestly, as that the olde honour and pristyne dygnitie, whiche scripture in tyme paste was in, and so nowe oughte to be, maye at the laste, be fully restored to scripture ageyne: We thynke it moche appertaynynge vnto our dueties, bothe to let no occasyon slyp, wherby religyon myghte at the laste be truely restaured, and also to withstãde all ingins, all assautes, made by the byshoppes of Rome, whiche neuer cesse to trouble trouthe, and cumbre religion. Amonges many, two thynges in especiall, make vs doo that we doo. Fyrst the feruent

loue ẏ we beare vnto trouthe. The ſeconde is, that we haue taken vpon vs, longe ſythens, the defence of religion. Certes, ſeing that the byſſhoppe of Rome, calleth lerned men from all parties, conductyng them by great rewardes, makynge as many of them Cardynalles, as he thinketh moſt mete and moſt redy to defẽde fraudis & vntrouthes, we could not but with moche anxietie caſte with our ſelfes, what ſoo great appꝛeparance of wittis ſhuld meane. As chaunce was, we geſſed euen as it folowed. We haue ben ſo longe acquaynted with Romayne ſubtylties, and poppyſſhe deceytes, that we well and eaſily iudged, the byſſhop of Rome to intende an aſſemble of his adherentes and men ſwoꝛne, to thynke all his luſtes lawes. We were not decepued. Paule

the

the byshop of Rome, hath called a councell, to the which he knew wel, eyther fewe or none of the chrysten princis coulde come, bothe the time that he indicted it, & also the place, where he appointed it to be, myght assure hym of this. But whyther wandereth not these poppysshe bulles, whether goo they nat astraye: what kynge is nat cyted and summoned by a prowde mynyster and seruant of kynges, to come to bolster vp errours, fraudes, deceytes, and vntrouthes: and to sette forth this feyned generall councell: For who wyl not thinke, that Paul, the byssh op of Rome, gothe sooner aboute to make men beleue, that he intendeth a generall counsell, than that he desyreth oone in dede? No, who can lesse desyre it, thanne they that do dispayre of their cause, ex-

cepte they be iudges, and gyue sen-
tence them selfes ayenste their ad-
uersaries? We, which very sooze a-
yenste our wyll, at any tyme leaue
of the pzocuremente of the realme
and common weale, nede neither to
come our selues, noz yet to send our
pzocuratours thither, no noz yet to
make our excuse foz either of both.
Foz who canne accuse vs, that we
come not at his call, which hath no
auctozitie to call vs. But foz a sea-
son let vs, as a sozte of blyndlinges
do, graunte, that he maye calle vs,
ꝑ he hath auctozitie so to do, yet we
pzay you, may not all men see, what
auayleth it, to come to this coũcell,
where ye shall haue no place, except
ye be knowen both wyllynge to op-
pzesse truthe, and also redye to con-
fyzme and stablyshe errours. Doo
not all men perceyue, as wel as we,
with

with what integritie, fydelytie, and religion, these men go about to discusse matters in controuersy, that take them in hand in so troublesom a tyme as this is? Is it not playn, what fruite the common weale of christendome maye looke for there, where as Mantua is chosen the place to kepe this councell at? Is there any prince, not being of Italy, yea is there any of Italye, prince, or other, dissentyng from the pope, that dareth come to this assemble, and to this place? If there come none, that dare speake for troden trouth, none that wyll venture his lyfe, is it meruayle, if the bishop of Rome beinge iudge, no man reppynynge, no man ayensayinge, the defenders of the papacy obteyn, that popishe auctoritie, nowe quaylyng and almoste fallen, be sette vp ayene? Is

this the waye, to helpe thynges afflycte, to redresse troubled religion, to lyfte vp oppressed trouth? Shal men this waye knowe, whether the Romayne byshops (whiche in very dede, ar, if ye loke eyther vpon their doctryne, or lyfe, farre vnder other byshoppes) ought to be made lyke theyr felowes, that is, to be pastours, in their own diosse. & so to vse no further power, or elles, whether they may make lawes, not only vnto other byshoppes, but also to kinges and emperours? O boldnesse, mete to be beten downe with force, & not to be cõuynced with argumẽtes. Can eyther Paule, that nowe lordeth, or any of his, ernestely goo aboute (if they alone, or at the leste without any aduersarye be thus in a corner assembled togyther) to hele the syckenesses, to take awaye the errours,

errours, to plucke downe the abuses, that nowe are crepte into the churche, and there be bolstered vp, by suche councelles, as nowe is like to be at Mantua? It is very lyke, that these, which proule for nothinge but profyte, woll right gladly pulle downe, all suche thynges, as their forefathers made, onely for the encrease of Money. Where as theyr forefathers, whan theyr honour, power, primacye, was called into questiõ, wold either in spite of goddis law, mayntein their dignitie, or to say better, their ītollerable pride, is it lyke, that these wol not trede in their steppes, & make naughty new canons, wherby they maye defende olde euyl decrees? Howe be it, what nede we to care, eyther what they haue done, or what they intende to do hereafter, for as moche as Eng-

lande hathe taken her leaue, of po-
pisshe crafftes for euer, neuer to be
deluded with theym hereafter. Ro-
mayne byshops haue nothynge to
doo with englysshe people, the one
dothe not trafycke with thother, at
the leste, thoughe they wyll haue to
doo with vs, yet we wolle none of
their marchaundyse, none of theyr
stuffe. We woll reteyne them of our
councell no more. We haue sought
our hurte, and bought our losse, a
great whyle to longe. Surely their
decrees, either touchynge thinges
sette vp, or putte downe, shall haue
none other place with vs, than all
byshoppes decrees haue, that is, if
we lyke them, we admytte them, yf
we do not, we refuse them. But lest
peraduenture men shal thinke vs,
to folowe our sensis to moche, and
that we moued by small or no iuste
causes

cauſes, forſake thauctoritie, cenſu-
res, decrees, and popiſhe councels,
we thoughte it beſte here, to ſhewe
our mynde to the hole worlde.
Wherfore we proteſte before god,
and all men, that we enbrace, pro-
feſſe, and woll euer ſo do, the ryghte
and holy doctrine of Chriſt. All the
articles of his faithe, no iote omit-
ted, be all ſoo dere vnto vs, that we
wolde moche ſooner ſtande in ieo-
perdy of our realme, than to ſe any
poynte of Chriſtis relygion in ieo-
perdye with vs. We proteſte, that
we neuer wente from the vnitie of
this fayth, neyther that we woll de-
part an ynche from it. No, we woll
moche ſooner loſe our lyues, than
any article of our belefe ſhall decay
in Englande. We, which in al this
cauſe, ſeeke nothyng but the glory
of god, the profyte and quietnes of
the

the woꝛlde, pꝛoteſte, that we can ſuf-
fre deceyuers no longer. We neuer
refuſed to come to a generall coun-
cell, no, we pꝛompſe all our labour,
ſtudy, and fydelitie, to the ſettynge
vp of troden trowth, and troubled
religion in their place ageyne, and
to doo all that ſhall lye in vs, to fy-
nyſhe ſuche controuerſies, as haue,
a great whyle to longe, vexed chꝛy-
ſtendome. Onely we woll all chꝛy-
ſten men be admonyſſhed, that we
can ſuffre no lenger, that they be e-
ſtemed wyllynge to take away er-
roꝛs, which in dede, by all the ways
theyꝛ wittes woll ſerue theym, go a-
bout this alone, that no man, peyne
of dethe, may ſpeake ageynſte any
errour oꝛ abuſe.

¶ We wolde haue a councelle, we
deſyꝛe it, ye and craue nothynge ſo
ofte of god, as that we maye haue
one.

one. But yet we woll, that it be suche, as christen men ought to haue, that is, franke and free, where euery man, without feare, may say his mynde. We desyre, that it be an holy councell, where euery man maye go about to set vp godlynes, & not apply all their study to oppressinge of trouthe. We woll it be generall, that is to say, kepte at suche tyme, and in suche place, that euery man, which seketh the glory of god, may be present, and there frankely vtter his mynde. For thanne it shall seme generall, eyther whan no mā, that dissenteth frome the byshop of Rome, is compelled to be frome it, or whā they that be present, are not letted by any iuste terrour, to saye boldly, that they truly thynke. For who wolde not gladly come to such a councell, except it be the pope, his car-

Cardinalles, and popishe byshoppes: On the other syde, who is so foolyshe, where as the chiefe point, that is to be handled in this councel, is the popes owne cause, power & primacy, to graunt, that the pope shuld reigne, shulde be iudge, shuld be president of this councell: If he, which in dede, can neuer think himselfe able to defende his cause, before any other Iudge, be euermore made his owne iuge, and so cõtrouerses not decyded, but errors sette vp, what can be deuysed in the cõmon welthe of Christendome more hurtfull to the trouthe, than generall councelles:

AND HERE to touche somewhat, their impudent arrogancye, by what law, power, or honest title, take they vpon them to cal kinges, to somon princis, to appere, where

they

their bulles commaunde them: In tyme paſte, all councelles were appoynted by thauctoꝛitie, conſente, and commaundement of themperour, kinges, and pꝛincis. why now taketh the byſhoppe of Rome this vppon hym: Some woll ſaye, it is moꝛe likely, that biſhops woll moꝛe tender the cauſe of religion, gladlier haue errours taken away, than emperours, kinges, oꝛ pꝛincis. The woꝛld hath good experience of thē, and euery man ſeeth, how faithfully they haue hādled religious matters. Is there any man, that dothe nat ſe, howe vertuouſly Paul, that nowe polleth, taketh occaſyon to ſet vp his tyꝛānye ageyn: Is it nat like that he, that choſeth ſuch a tyme as this is, to kepe a councel, moch entendeth the redꝛeſſe of thinges that nowe are amyſſe, that he ſeketh the reſto=

restoryng of religion, that now calleth a councell, the Emperour and the frenche kynge, two pryncis of great power, so bent to warres, that neyther they, nor any other christen prince, can in maner do any thyng, but loke for the ende of this longe warre. Go to, goo to bysshoppe of Rome, occasion longe wysshed for, offreth her selfe vnto you, take her, she openethe a wyndowe for youre fraudes to crepe in at, call your cardynals, your owne creatures, shew them, this is a ioly tyme to deceyue pryncis in. O fooles, we calle you fooles agaynst our wylles. O wycked men, we call you wycked with all our harte. Are you not fooles, whiche beinge longe suspected, not onely of princis, but of all christen peple in maner, that in no case you coulde be brought to a general coũ

cell

cell, playnly shewe the holle worlde, that by these your cõciliables, your hutter mutter in corners, you take away al hope of a lawful catholike and generall councell: Are you not wycked, which so hate trouth, that excepte she be vtterly banysshed, ye wyll neuer cesse to vexe her? The liuynge god is alyue, neyther trouth his darlynge, he beinge alyue, can be called to so great shame, contumely, iniurie. I lye, it maye well be called to all these, but yet it canne come to none of theym. Who is he, that greuously lamenteth not, men to be of suche shamefull boldenes, to shewe apertely, that they be enemyes vnto Christe hym selfe: On thother syde, who wyl nat be glad, to see suche men as folysshe as they be wycked: The worlde, good bysshop, is not nowe in a lyght suspi-

tion, as it hath bene, that you woll no reformation of errors, but euery man seeth before his eyes, your deceytes, your wycked myndes, your immortall hatrede that ye beare ageynste the trouthe. Euery manne seeth, howe many miserable tragedies, your pretense of an vnitie and cõcorde, hath brought into christendome. They see, your faire face of peace hath serued sedition, & troublid almost, al christẽ realmes. They se, ye neuer oppugne religion more, than whan ye woll seme most to defende it. They be sorye, to see, that great wyttes, a longe season, haue spende their hole strength in defẽce of deceytes: reason to putte his hole power, to the promotynge of pride, and vngodlynes: vertues to serue vyces: holynes to be slaue to hypocrysie: prudencye, to subtylitie, Iu-

stice

ſtice to tyranny. They be glad, that ſcripture nowe fyghteth for it ſelfe, & not ageinſt it ſelfe. They be glad, that god is not compelled to be ageinſte god, Chriſte ageinſt Chriſt. They be glad, that ſubtilitie hathe doone no more hurt to relygion in tyme paſt, than now cõſtancy doth good to trouthe. They ſe, the markes that ye haue ſhot at in all your councelles paſte, to be, Lucre, Money, Gaynes. They ſe, you ſought your profyte, yea, thoughe it were ioyned with ỹ ſlaughter of trouthe. They ſe, ye wolde euer, that ſooner iniurie ſhuld be done to the goſpel, than that your auctoritie, that is to ſay, arrogant impudency, ſhulde in any poynte be diminiſhed. And we pray you, what may Paule, the byſhop of Rome, ſeme nowe to go aboute, whiche ſeinge all princis occupied

cupped in greatte affayres, wolde steale, as he callith it a general coũcell, what other thynge than herby to haue some excuse, to refuse a generall coũcell hereafter, whan time & place moche better, for the handelynge of matters of religion, shall be gyuen vnto princis of christendome? He wol think he may thã do, as princis nowe do. He wol thinke it laufull not to come than, bicause princis nowe come not? We praye god, that we euer braule nat oone with an nother for relygion, no nor that where we dissente as moche as men may, we al say, we defende the better part, we be in the right way. We pray god, that the worlde maye enioye peace and tranquillitie, and that then we may haue bothe tyme and place to settle relygion. For except fyrste princis agree, and warre laid

laide aſyde, ſeke peace, he loſeth his labour, that ſeketh a general councell. Iſ the byſchop of Rome, maye kepe his councell, whyle they thus be togyther, wol not there be made many pyety decrees? Iſ they, whiche wolde come, if they had leyſer, be abſente, and we, whiche though we ſafely myght come, wyl not loſe any parte of our ius, trowe you, in all our abſence, that the byſchop of Rome, wyl not handle his profite & primacy wel? Paule, howe can any of ours not refuſe to come to Mantua, through ſo many peryls, a citie ſo farre ſet from Englande, ſo nigh your frendes, kynſmen, and adherentes? Is he not vnworthye lyfe, that where he maye tarye at home, woll paſſe through ſo many ieoperdies of lyfe? Can he, which cometh to Cremona, a citie not farre from

Mantua, be safe, if he be taken not to be the byshop of Romes frende, ꝑ is, as the cõmon sort of deceiuid people doth interpretate, an heretique: And if there come to Mantua such a nombre, as wolde furnyshe a generall coũsel, may not Mãtua seme to litell, to receyue so many gestes: Put these two togyther, al the way from Englande to Mantua, is full of iuste peryls, and yet if ye escape all those, the very place, where the councell is kepte, is more to be suspected, than all the way. Do ye not knowe, al cyuyle lawes, to compell no man to come to any place, where he shall be in ieoperdy of his lyfe al the way: We haue no safe conducte to passe and retourne by the domynyons of other pryncis. And yf we had a saulfe conduct, yet shulde not we be charged with raschenes, that

where

where iuste terrour myght haue dis-
swaded vs from suche a iourneye,
commytted our selues to suche pe-
ryls: Surely, he that, the tyme be-
inge as it is, thinges standynge as
they do, wyll go from Englande to
Mantua, may be careles, if he lack
wytte, sure of his arryualle, or re-
turne from thens, he canne not be.
For who doth not knowe, howe oft
the byshops of Rome, haue playde
fals partes with them, that in suche
matters haue trusted to their saufe
conductes: Howe ofte haue they
caused, by their perfydie, suche men
to be slayne, as they haue promised
by their feith before, that they shuld
both come safe, and go safe: These
be no newes, popes to be false, po-
pes to kepe noo promyse, neither
with god nor man: Popes, cõtrary
to their othes, to defyle their cruell

handes with honest mens bloudde. But we tarye to longe in thynges, that as well touche all men, as vs. We woll, these nowe layde aparte, tourne our Oration into such thinges, as priuately towche bothe vs, kynge Henry the eight, and all Englyshe men. Is it vnknowen, to any man, what mynde Paule the bishop of Rome, beareth to vs king Henry the. viii. to vs his nobilitie, to vs his gracis byshoppes, and to vs all his gracis subiectis, for the pullyng downe of his vsurped power, and proude primacy, for expellyng of his vsurped iurisdiction, & for delyuering of our realme from his greuous bõdage and pollage? Who seeth not hym euen inflamed with hatrede ageynste vs, and the flames to be moche greatter, than he can nowe kepe theym in? He is

an

an open enemy, he dissembleth noo lenger, prouokynge all men, by all the meanes ẏ he can, to endomage vs and our coũtrey. This thre yeres he hath ben occupied in no one thinge so moche, as howe he myght stire vp the cõmens of Englande, nowe corruptynge some with money, some with dignities. We lette passe, what letters he hath writen, to christen princis, with howe great feruent studye, he hath exhorted mẽ to sette vpon vs. The good vycar of Christe, by his doinge, sheweth, howe he vnderstondeth the wordes of Christe. He thinketh, he playeth Christis parte well, whan he maye say as Christe dyd, *Non veni pacẽ mittere in terram, sed gladium*, I come not to make peace in erthe, but to sende swerdes about: And not such swerdes, as Christe wolde his to be ar-

med withall, but suche as cruelle mãquellers, abuse in the slaughter of their neighbours. We meruayle lyttel, though they vexe other prin-cis ofte, seing they recompence our fauour, shewed to theym, with con-tumelyes, our benefites with iniu-ries. We woll not reherse here, how many our benefytes, bestowed vpõ Romayne byshoppes, be loste. God be with suche vngrate Carles, vn-woxthy to be noumbxed amongest men. Certes, suche that a man may welle doubte, whether god oz man hath better cause to hate them, But ẏ we haue lerned to owe good wyl, euen to them that immoxtally hate vs, what coulde we wysshe them soo euylle, but they haue deserued mo-che woxse: We wysshe theym this hurte alone, that god sende them a better mynde. God be thanked, we

haue

haue made all theyr seditious entē-
tes, soner to shewe theyr great ma-
lyce towardes vs, thā to do vs mo-
che hurte, yet they haue wel taught
vs, euermoze to take good hede, of
our enemyes. Undoutedly, it were
good goynge to Mantua, and to
leaue theyr whelpes amonges the
lambes of our flocke. When we be
wery of our welth, we wol euen do
than, as they wolde haue vs nowe
do. No no, as longe as we shall see
his harte so good towardes vs, we
trust vpō his warnyng, we shal wel
prouyde to withstande his cruel ma
lyce. No let hym nowe spende his
deceytes, whan they can hurt none
but suche as wolde deceyue, and ar
deceyued. They haue, by sundrye
wayes, made vs preuy, howe moch
we be bound to them. It went nigh
their hartes, to see the iudgemente
of

of July, of Clement the seuenth, of Paule the thirde, nothing to be regarded with vs. They be affraide, yf we shulde susteyne no hurte, bycause we iustely reiected their prymacy, that other princis wolde begynne to do lykewyse, and to shake of theyr shulders, the heuye burthens, that they so lõge haue borne, ageynste Scripture, all ryght and reason. They be sory, to se the way stopped, that nowe theyr tyrannye auaryce & pryde, can haue noo passage into Englande, whyche was wont to walke, to triumph, to tosse, to trouble all men. They can scase suffer priuileges, that is to saye lycence to spoyle our cytesins, gyuen them by our forfathers, brought in by errorfull custome, to be taken from them. They thinke it vnlaufull, that we require thinges lawfull

full of them that wyll be vnder no lawes. They thynke, we do theym wronge, bycause we woll not suffer them to do vs wronge any lengar. They see their marchandyse to be banysshed, to be forbydden. They se, that we wyl bie no lengar chalke for chese. They see they haue loste a fayre flese, vengiable soorye, that they canne dispatche no more pardons, dispensations, tot, quottes, with the reste of their baggage and tromperie. Englande is no more a babe, there is no manne here, but nowe he knoweth, that they do folysshely, that gyue golde for leade, more weyght of ẏ, thã they receyue of this. They passe not, thoughe Peter and Poules faces, be grauẽ in the leade, to make fooles fayne. No we be soory, that they shulde abuse holye sayntes bysages, to the

begy=

begylynge of the woꝛlde. Surely excepte god take awaye our righte wittes, not only his auctoꝛitie ſhall be dꝛiuē out foꝛ euer, but his naine alſo ſhoꝛtly ſhal be foꝛgotten in Englande. We woll from hensfoꝛthe, aſke counſell of hym and his, whā we luſte to be deceyued, whan we couet to be in errour, whan we deſyꝛe to offende god, trouth, and honeſtie. Jf a man may geſſe the hole woꝛke by the fundation, where deceytes begynneth the woꝛke, can any other than deceytes be buylded vpon this foundation? What can you loke foꝛ in this Mantuan counſel, other than thoppꝛeſſion of truth and true religion? Jf there be any thynge well done, thynke as euery man dothe, byſhoppes of Rome to be accuſtomed, to do a few thinges well, that many euyll may the better

ter be taken at their handes. They, whan they luste, can yelde somme parte of their ryghte, they are contente, that somme of their decrees, somme of theyr errours and abuses be reprehended: but they are neuer more to be feared, thanne whan they shewe them selfe moste gentyl. For yf they graunt a fewe, they are many: yf they leaue a lyttell, they wylle be sure of a greatte deale. Scarse a man maye knowe, howe to handell hym selfe, that he take no hurte at their handes, yea whan they blesse hym, whyche seldome do good, but for an intent to do euyll. Certaynly come who soo wyll, to these shoppes of deceytes, to these faires of fraudes, we woll lese no part of our ryght in cõming at his call, that oughte to be called, and not to calle. We wolle neyther

come

come at Mantua, nor sende thyther for this mattier.

THYTHERTO we haue reasoned the mattier, as thoughe the councell shulde haue bene kepte at Mantua. Nowe wolle we speake somwhat of this last bull, that prorogeth the councell vntyll Nouembre, and appoynteth it to be kept no where. Is it not lyke, that nothyng shall be done amysse, in this councell, if it be kept no where? As god help the pope and his, a matter wel handled. We proroge the councell, sayth the pope, bycause the duke of Mantua, woll in no case suffre vs to kepe any there, excepte we mainteyne a noumbre of warryours for the defence of his towne. Is not this a prety, or to say as it is, a spitefull mockynge of all christen pryncis, to cal them to a place, where, in dede

sytteth aboue all kynges: wordes can not countreuayle weapons, reson is not harde, where souldiours are hyred to rage. Thus all men se, that woll se, if an army were there, that no wyse man wolde putte his lyfe in ieoperdye, to come thyther. On the other syde, yf there be none armye, that thenne councelle there canne be none. Soo that alwayes the pope and his, were sure, that there shoulde be no generall councelle. Nowe lette vs adde also this thynge vnto thother. If we, whiche dwell farre from Mantua, had intended to haue bene there, shulde we not haue bene at our iourneyes ende, before this laste bulle came to vs: Shulde we not haue payd our greatte costes and charges, with a greatter losse of our labour: The day was appoynted, the yere of our

lorde. M.D. xxxvii. the. xxiii. daye of Maye. This newe bulle cometh to vs, in the later end of June, and to them, to whome it came soonest, it coulde not so soone come, but it myght iustely seme to come to late. But let other princis and prelates, if there be any, that prepared thytherwarde, chaufe with theym, we fele no damage, whiche sturred no foote that waye for this pourpose. All men may well see, that he is but lyttell sory, no, that he nothyng careth, for the Turkes inuadynge of christen princis dominions, whiche wolde princis to come nowe to coũcell, whan in dede they can scase, by all theyr study, industry, and wyttes, resyste his cruelle interprises. Howe be it we woll not charge thẽ with it, all though we myght better laye it to their charge, than they be

able

able to put it away.

¶ This last bull, procedinge wonderfull popishely, prorogeth the holy assemble vnto the month of Nouembre, vntyl that tyme we are not loked for. Than he commaundeth, specially patriarches, archbishops, byshops, abbottes, and other of the spiritualtie, by the vertue of obedience, and vnder peyne of cursyng, to be present. But where he wyl be, or to what place, we shall come, no man knoweth. No in very dede, he knoweth not as yet hym selfe. And what maketh it matter, as good no where, as where it can not be: aswel no place serueth hym, that intēdeth no councelle, as all places: moche better to name none, than to name suche, as he purposeth not to come to. He breakethe noo promyse, if he make none. To mocke princis but

ones, is a ſmalle faute in a pope.
This we be aſſured of, eyther he
woll appoynte one, yf he appoynte
any, in ſome citie of his owne, (we
call thoſe his owne, which his pre-
deceſſours haue wrongfully extor-
ted frome other pryncis, and thoſe,
whiche he nowe kepeth, contrary to
equitie and iuſtyce) or elles he wyll
call vs to ſome other pryncis domi-
nion. To the fyrſt no man yͤ wiſe is,
and diſſenteth from his opynyons,
woll come. And if he call vs, where
he without an hoſte can not be ſuf-
fred to entre, ſhall not they be iuſt-
ly charged with folye, whiche ones
deceyued, woll be deceyued ayene?
Is he not lyke to deceyue vs, that
promyſeth more than he canne per-
forme? But we diſpute to longe in
a thynge, that pertayneth lyttell to
vs. For what place ſo euer he find,
be it

be it neuer soo sure, we wolle neuer come to any assemble at his calle. No, we wolle Paule and his adherentes vnderstand that, that we oft haue sayd, and nowe say, and euer woll say, He nor his hath none auctorite, no iurisdiction in Englãde. We giue him no more then he hath, that is neuer a dele. That which he hath vsurped ageinst goddis lawe, and extorted by violẽce, we by good ryght, take from hym ageyne. But he and his woll say, we gaue them a Primacy. We here them wel. We gaue it you in deede. If you haue auctoritie vpon vs, as long as our consent gyueth it you, and you euer more woll make your plee vpõ our consent, thã let it haue euẽ an ende, where it began, we consent no longer, your auctoritie must nedes be goone. If we beinge deceyued by

false pretense of yuell alleged scriptures, gaue to you that you ought to haue refused, Why may we not, our errour nowe perceyued, youre deceyte espied, take it ageyne? We princis wrote our selfes, to be inferiours to popes: as longe as we thought so, we obeyde them as our superiours. Nowe, we wryte not as we dyd, and therfore they haue noo great cause to meruayle, if we hereafter do nat as we dyd. Bothe the lawes cyuile, and also the lawes of god, be on our syde. For a free man borne dothe not lese his libertie, no nor hurte the plee of his lybertie, though he write hym selfe a bonde man. Ageyne, yf they leane to custome, we sende them to saynte Cyprian, whiche sayth, that custome, if trouthe be not ioyned with hit, is nothyng, but *erroris vetustas*, that is,

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an olde errour. Christe said, Ego *sum uia ueritas & uita*, I am ye way trouth and lyfe. He neuer sayd, Ego *sum consuetudo*, I am the custome. Wherfore seynge custome serueth you on the one syde, and scripture vs, vppon thother, are ye able to matche vs? In howe many places, doth Christ monyshe you to seke no primacy, to preferre your selfe to no body, no, to be obedict vnto all creatures. Your olde title *Seruus seruorum*, euyll agreeth with your newe forged dygnitie. But we wol not tary in matters playne. We onely desyre god, that Cesar, and other Christian princis, wol agree vpon some holy councel, where trouthe may be tried, and relygyon sette vp, whiche haue bene hurte by nothynge so sore. as by generall not generall councelles. Errours, abuses growe to faste. Erudi-

mini, erudimini qui iudicatis terram, Gette you lernyng, you that iuge the erth, & excogitate some remedy, for these so many diseases of the sycke churche. They that be wyseste, doo dispaire of a generall councell. Wherfore we thinke it nowe beste, that euery prince calle a councell prouincial, and euery prince to redresse his owne realme. We make all menne priuey, what we thynke beste to be done for the redresse of religion. If they lyke it, we doubte not, but they wyll folowe it, or some other better. Our truste is, that all princis woll so handel them selfe in this behalf, that princis may enioy their owne, and priestis of Rome content them selfis with that they ought to haue. Princis as we truste, woll no lõger nourysshe wolues whelpes. They woll subscrybe no more to popisshe

pride,

pride, to the papacy. &c.

¶ Fauour our doinges, O chryſten pryncis, your honour and ancient maieſtie is reſtored. Remembre, there is nothynge perteynynge ſo moche to a princis honour, as to ſette forthe trouthe, and to helpe relygyon. Take you hede, that theyr deceyte worke not more myſchiefe, than your vertue can do good. And euerlaſtynge warre, we wolde all princis had with this papacye. As for theyr decrees, ſo harkē to them, that yf in this Mantuan aſſemble, thynges be wel done, ye take them, but not as authoriſed by them, but ẏ trouth, & thynges that mayntein religion, are to be taken at all mens handes. And euen as we woll admitte thynges wel made, ſo if there be any thyng determyned in preiudyce of trouth, for mayntenance of

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the euyll grounded primacy, or that may hurte thauctorite of kynges, we protest vnto the hole world, that we neither allowe it, nor wyl at any tyme allowe it.

YE HAVE CHRISTEN readers our mynde, concernyng the generall councell: we thynke you all see, that Paul, and his Cardinals, Bysshops, abbottes, Monkes, Fryers, with the reste of the rablement, do nothynge lesse intende, than the knowlege or serche of trouth. Ye se this is no tyme mete, Mantua noo place mete, for a generall councell. And though they were bothe mete, yet excepte some other cal this coũcell, you see, that we neither nede to come nor to sende. You haue harde howe euery prynce in his owne realme, maye quiete thynges amysse. If there be any of you, that canne shewe

shewe vs a better way, we promise, with all harty desyre to do that, that shalbe thought beste for the setlyng of religion, and that we woll leaue our owne aduyses, yf any manne shewe vs better. Whyche mynde of ours, we moste hartily praye god, that gaue it vs, not onely to encrease in vs, but also to sende it vnto all christen princis, all christen prelates, al christen people.

LONDINI IN AEDIBVS
THOMAE BERTHELETI
REGII IMPRES.
AN. M. D. XXXVII.
CVM PRIVILEGIO.

HZM.

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LONDINI IN AEDIBVS
THOMAE BERTHELETI
REGII IMPRES.
AN. M. D. XXXVII.
CVM PRIVILEGIO.

HZM.

AN EPISTLE OF THE MOST MYGHTY AND REdoubted Prynce Henry the viii. by the grace of God Kynge of Englande and of Fraunce, lorde of Irlande, defender of the Faith, and supreme heed of the Churche of Englande, nexte vnder Christe, wrytten to the Emperours Maiestie, to all Christen Princes, and to all those that trewly and syncerely professe Christes religion.

Hum: Dyson

IN THIS EPISTLE BOTHE the causes are playnely declared, why the Kynges hyghenes owght neyther to sende nor go to the Councill indicted at Vincence, and also how perylouse a thinge it is for all suche as professe the trewe doctrine of Christ, to come thether.

HEREVNTO ALSO IS ANnexed the Protestation made the last yere by the Kynges hyghenes, his holle Counsayle and clergye, as touchinge the Councille indicted at Mantua &c.

¶ Rede bothe o Christen Reader, truthe is comynge home, longe afore beynge in captyuytye, steppe forth and meete her by the waye: yf thou see her presente, embrace hir, and shewe thy selfe gladde of her retourne.

Henry the. viii. by the grace of god kinge of England and of Fraunce. ꝛc. saluteth the Emperour, Christen princes, and al true Christen men, desyrynge peace and concorde amonges them.

HERE AS NOT long sithens a boke came forthe in our and all our counsayles names, whiche bothe conteined many causes, why we refused the Councyle, then by the byshoppe of Rome fyrst indicted at Mantua, to be kept the. xxiii. day of May, after prorroged to Nouēbre, no place appointed where it shuld be kept, And where as the same boke doth sufficiently proue, that our cause coulde take no hurt, neither with any thig done or decreed in such a cōpany of sworne men, nor in any other councylle called by the byshop of Rome:

we thought it nothynge necessarie, so oft to make newe protestations, as the byshop of Rome by his synguler subtylte and crafte, dothe inuente wayes to mocke the worlde by newe pretenced generall councilles. No, if that our boke alone may for euer defend our cause, and kepe vs from all conuenticles made by the byshoppe of Rome, not onely suche as Paulus nowe byschoppe there, calleth vs vnto, but also all other that shall be made by any his successour, trewely there is no doubte, but that it beynge confirmed with this our epistle, may wel excuse vs, which intende to come to Vincence euen as moch as we came to Mantua. And yet we neyther put forthe that boke, neyther yet we wold this epistle to be set afore it, that there is any man, which disireth more hartlyer

lyer than we, a generall Counciłłe, or els gladlyer wolde come to it: so that it were such a one, as might be called generall, free, holye, suche a one, we meane, as we speake of in our protestation made concernyng the councill of Mantua. Truly as our forefathers inuented nothynge more holyer thanne generall councilles: so there is almost no thinge, that may do more hurt to the Christian comon welthe, to the faith, to our religion, than generall councils, if we do abuse them to luker, to gaynes, to the establyshment of errours. They be called general, and euen by theyr name do admonyshe vs, that all Christen men, which do dyscente in any opinion, may in thē openly, franckly, and without feare of punyshement or dyspleasure, say theyr mynde. For seing suche thin-

ges as are decreed in general counsayles, touche egally all men, it is mete that euery man, maye boldely say there, that he thinketh. Neither we suppose, that it ought to be called a generall Councyle, where alonely those men are harde, whiche are determyned for euer, in al pointes, to defende the poppysshe parte, and to arme them selfe to fyghte in the byssshoppe of Romes quarell, thoughe it were agaynste god and his scryptures. It is noo generall Councyle, neyther it oughte to be called general, where the same men be aduocates and aduersaryes, the same accused and iudges. No, it is agaynste the lawe of nature, either that we shulde make so vnreasonable a lawe agaynste our selues, eyther that we shuld suffre our selues to be lefte without all defence, and

beinge

beynge oppreſſed with greateſte iniuryes, to haue no refuge to ſuccor our ſelues at. The byſchop of Rome is our great ennemy, he beareth vs immortall hatred, as we and all other men maye well percepue by his doynges. He deſireth nothing more than our hurt, and the deſtruccio of our realme: do not we than violate the iugement of nature, if we gyue him power and auctoritie to be our iudge: His honour, power, and primacie, whiche now are in queſtion, ſhall they not all be eſtablyſſhed, yf he beinge iudge, maye decide oure cauſes as hym lyſteth: If he may at his pleaſure oppreſſe a cauſe moſte rightuouſe, and ſet vp his, moſte agayne trouth: Certaynly he is very blynde, that ſeeth not, what ende we maye loke for of our controuerſyes, if ſuch our enemy may gyue the ſen

tice. We desire, if it were in any wyse possible, a Coūcyl, where some hope may be, that those thynges shall be restored, which now beinge depraue, are lyke, if they be not amended, to be the vtter ruyne of christen relygion. And as we do desyre such a Counsell, and thynke it mete, that all men in all theyr prayers shulde craue and desyre it of God, euen soo we thynk it perteyneth vnto our office, to prouide bothe that these poppyshe subtyltes hurte none of oure subiectes, and also to admonische other Christen Pryncis, that the Byshoppe of Rome maye not by theyr consent abuse the auctoritie of kynges, either to the plucking vp of the Gospell by the rootes (that now begynneth to spryng, to growe, and spred abrode) either to the troubling of pryncis lyberties, to the dymynyshynge

thynge of kynges auctorities, and to the great blemyshe of their pryncely Maiestie. We doubte nothyng, but a reder not percyall, wyll sone approue such thynges, as we wryte in the treaties folowynge, not soo moche for oure excuse, as that the worlde maye perceyue, both the sondrye deceytes, craftes, & subtylties of the pappystes, and also, how moch we desyre, that controuersies in relygion maye ones be taken awaye. All that we sayde there of Mantua, maye here well be spoken of Vincence. They do almooste agree in all poyntes. Neyther it is lyke, that there woll be any more at this Concille at Vincence, than were the laste yere at Mantua. Trewely he is worthy to be deceyued, that beynge twyse mocked, woll not beware the thyrde tyme. If any this laste yere

made

made forthe towarde Mantua, and beynge halfe on theyr waye, then perceaued, that they hadde taken vppon them that iourney in vayne, we do not thynke them so foolysshe, that they woll hereafter ryde farre out of towne, to be mocked. The tyme also, and the state of thynges is suche, that matters of Relygion maye rather nowe be brought farther in trouble, as other thynges are, than be commodyously intreated of, and decyded. For where as in maner the hole worlde is after such sorte trowbled with warres, soo incombred with the greate preparations that the Turke maketh, canne there be any manne so agaynste the setlynge of relygyon, that he wolle thynke this tyme mete for a generall Councille? vndoubtely it is mete that such controuersyes, as we haue

with

with the byschoppe of Rome, be taken as they are, that is, moch greatter then that they maye eyther be dyscussed in this soo troublesome a tyme, or elles be commytted vnto proctours, without our greate ieoperdie, albeit the tyme were neuer so quyet. What other princes wyll do, we can not tell, but we wyll neyther leaue our realme at this tyme, neyther we wyll truste any proctour with our cause, wherein the holle staye and welthe of our Realme stõdethe, but rather we wyll be at the handlynge therof our selfe. For excepte both another iudge be agreed vppon for those matters, and also a place more commodyouse be prouyded, for the debatynge of our causes, albe it all other thynges were as we wolde haue them, yet maye we lawefully refuse to come or send

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any to the Councille. We woll in no cale make hym oure arbiter, whiche not many yeres paſte, our cauſe not harde, gaue ſentence agaynſte vs. We woll that ſuche doctrine, as we, folowyng the ſcripture, do profeſſe, tytely to be examyned, diſcuſſed, and to be brought to ſcripture, as to the onely touche ſtone of trewe lernynge. We wyll not ſuffre them to be abolyſſhed, ere euer they be dyſcuſſed, ne to be oppreſſed, before they be knowen: moche leſſe we wyl ſuffre them to be troden downe, beyng ſo clerely trewe. No, as there is no iote in ſcripture, but we woll defende it, thoughe it were with ieopardye of oure lyfe, and peryll of this oure Realme: ſoo is there nothynge, that dothe oppreſſe this doctryne, or obſcure it, but we woll be at contynuall warre therewith. As

we

we haue abrogated all olde popysh tradicions in this our Realme, whiche eyther dydde helpe his tyranny, or encrease his pryde: so yf the grace of God forsake vs not, we will well forsee, that no newe nowghtye tradicions be made with our consent. And what mater is it, we pray you, yf we doo not soo moche esteme his auctoritie, whan the Duke of Mantua setteth so lytle by it? For if the bysshoppe of Rome dydde ernestely intende to kepe a Councyl at Mantua, and hath power by the lawe of God, to calle pryncis to what place hym lyketh: why hath he not also auctoritie, to chose what place hym lysteth? The Bysshop chose Mantua, the Duke kepte hym out of it. If Paule the Bysshoppe of Romes auctoritie be so greate, as he pretendeth, why coulde not he compell Federicus,

dericus, Duke of Mantua, that the Councyll myghte be kepte there: The Duke wolde not suffre it. No, he forbadde hym his towne. Howe chaunceth it, that here excommunycations flye not abroode: why dothe he not punysshe this Duke: whye is his power, that was wont to be more then full, here emptye: wonte to be more then all, here nothynge: Dothe he not calle men in vayne to a Councylle, if they that come at his callynge, be excluded the place, to the whyche he calleth theym: Maye not kynges iustely refuse to come at his calle, when the Duke of Mantua maye denye hym the place, that he choseth: If other prynces order hym, as the Duke of Mantua hath doone, what place shall be lefte hym, where he maye kepe his generall Concill: Agayne,

If

If Pynces haue gyuen hym this auctozitye, to calle a Councille, is hit not neceſſarye, that they gyue hym alſo, all thoſe thynges, without the whyche he canne not exercyſe that his power: Shall he calle men, and woll ye let hym fynde no place to call them vnto: Trewely he is not wonte to appoynte one of his owne Cytyes, a place to kepe the Councill in. No the good man is ſo faythefull and frendely towarde other, that ſeldome he deſyzeth Pzincis to be his geſtes. And admytte he ſhulde calle vs to one of his Cities, ſhulde we ſafely walke within the walles of ſuch our enemyes towne: were it mete foz vs there to dyſcuſſe controuerſyes of Relygyon, oz to kepe vs out of our ennemyes trappes: meete to ſtudye foz the defence of ſuche doctryne as we pzofeſſe, oz

rather

rather howe we myghte in ſuche a thronge of perylles be in ſauegarde of oure lyfe: Well, in this one acte the Bychoppe of Rome hath declared, that he hath none auctoꝛytye vppon places in other mennes dommynyons, and therfoꝛe yf he pꝛomyſe a Councille in any of thoſe, he pꝛomyſeth that that is in an other man to perfourme, and ſo may he deceyue vs agayne. Nowe if he call vs to one of his owne townes, we be a frayde to be at ſuche an hoſtes table. we ſaye, better to ryſe a hungred, then to goo thenſe with our bellyes fulle. But they ſaye, the place is founde, we nede noo moꝛe ſeke where the Councill ſhall be kepte. As who ſaythe, that, that chaunced at Mantua, maye not alſo chaunce at Vyncence. And as thoughe it were verye lyke, that the

Venecy-

Uenecians, menne of ſuche wyſe-
dome, ſhoulde not bothe foꝛeſee,
and feare alſo that, that the wyſe
Duke of Mantua ſemed to feare.
Certes, whan we thynke vppon
the ſtate, that the Uenecians be
in nowe, it ſemeth no very lyke-
ly thynge, that they woll eyther
leaue Uincence theyꝛ Citye to ſoo
many nations, withoute ſomme
greate garriſon of ſouldyers, oꝛ-
elles that they beyng elles where,
ſo ſoꝛe charged all redy, wyl nowe
noꝛyſſhe an armye there. And if
they wolde, dothe not Paulus
hym ſelfe graunte, that it ſhulde
be an euyll pꝛeſydent, and an euell
exaumple, to haue an armed Con-
ctille: Howe ſo euer it ſhall be, we
moſte hartely deſyꝛe you, that ye
wolle vouchſafe, to reede thoſe

thynges, that we wrote this laste yere, touchynge the Mantuan Councille. For we nothynge doubte, but you, of your equytie, wyll stande on our syde agaynste theyr subtyltye and fraudes, and iudge (excepte we be deceyued) that we in this busynesse neyther gaue so moche to oure affections, neyther withoute great and moste iuste causes refused theyr Councilles, theyr Censures, and Decrees. whither these our wrytinges please all men, or no, we thynke, we ought not to passe moche. For if that that indyfferentely is wrytten of vs, maye please indyfferent reders, oure desyre is accomplysshed. The false and mystakynge of thynges, by men percyall, shall moue vs nothynge, or elles verye lytle.

lyttell. If we haue sayde aughte agaynste the deceytes of the Bysshoppe of Rome, that maye seme spoken to sharpely, we prayе you impute it to the hatredde we bare vnto vyces, and not to any yuell wyll that we bare hym. No, that he, and all his, maye perceyue, that we are rather at stryfe with his vices, than with hym, and his, oure prayer is, bothe that it maye please god at the last to open theyr eyes, to make softe theyr harde hartes, and that they ones maye with vs (theyr owne glorye sette aparte) studye to sette forth the euerlastynge glorye, of the euerlastynge God.

¶ Thus myghtye Emperoure fare ye moste hartely well, and ye Christen Prynces, the pyllers and staye

ſtaye of Chriſtendome, Fare ye hartely well. Alſo all ye, whatte people ſo euer ye are, whyche doo deſyre, that the Goſpell and glory of Chryſte maye flouriſhe, Fare ye hartely well.

¶ Gyuen at London oute of our Palace at weſtmynſter, the eyght of Apryll, the nyne and twentye yere of oure Reygne.

LONDINI IN AEDIBVS
THOMAE BERTHE-
LETI REGII IM-
PRES-
SORIS. EXCVS.

ANNO. M. D. XXXVIII.

CVM PRIVILEGIO.